

What are the barriers encountered by the physiotherapists in their role of physical activity promoters?



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Statement of the problem

- ◆ In WHO's multisectorial approach, physical activity (PA) promotion needs support of the health professionals (primary care). This role is supported by the trusting relationship established in patients by health care providers (Peterson, 2007).
- ◆ They can help people to begin or maintain regular PA by specific counselling and stimulating (Pate et al., 2010). The involvement of health care professionals in PA promotion provide mixed success (Grandes et al., 2009).
- ◆ The World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) argues that the physiotherapists (PTs) are ideally placed to promote, guide and prescribe safe PA.
- ◆ PTs are considered as able to motivate people to become more active (Sheedy et al., 2000) even their effectiveness could be improved (Shirley et al., 2010; O'Donoghue et al., 2012).
- ◆ Three categories of actions are implemented by the PTs during their work to promote PA: actions (52.4%), orientations (19.9%) and, information (27.7%) (Mouton et al., accepted).

- ◆ Moreover, these authors pointed out that significant relationships between the PTs representations about PA and self-reported exercise promotion/prescription underline that specific education programs designed to improve their ability are needed.
- ◆ On the field, PTs often mention several barriers to PA promotion (time-constraint, lack of practical tools ...) but these have not been studied yet.



Goals of the study

- ◆ To identify the barriers pointed out by a group of PTs
- ◆ To help them suggesting original solutions to be implemented into the professional practice
- ◆ To prepare a booklet to disseminate among the health professionals

Methods

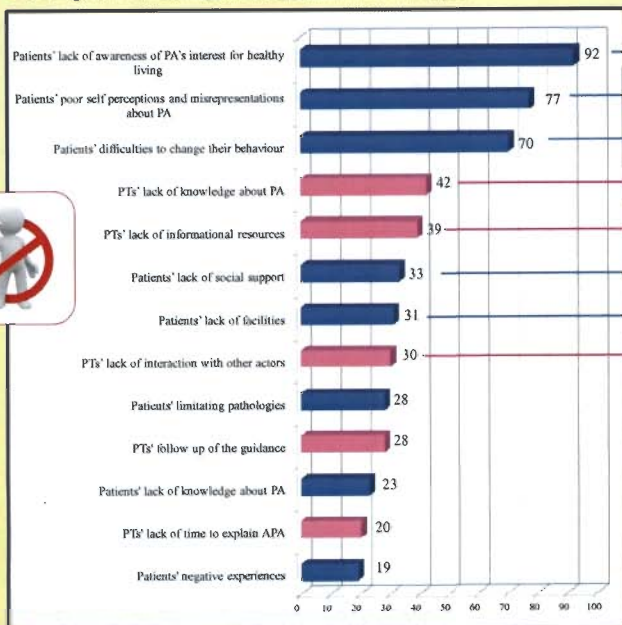
- ◆ 15 physiotherapists (PT)
- ◆ A 3 hours meeting (nominal group technique)
 - Short introduction (basic notions about PA)
 - Description of problems that PTs encountered when they want to promote PA by the participants
 - List on the 'blackboard' + validation
 - Vote on 8 categories to be discussed
 - 4 subgroups choosing randomly 1 barrier
 - Identification of solutions to cope with selected problem
 - Oral reports and comments
 - Second round
- ◆ Video recording + written documents
- ◆ Preparation of a written report by the researchers and validated by the subjects



Results and discussion



- ◆ 13 categories identified (scores 92 to 19 points - max. 120 points)
- ◆ 8 categories selected by the subjects in order to suggest ...



... actions to be implemented

- ◆ Talking with the patient about his/her lifestyle (PA's representations), informing about the recommendations, providing guidance and advices, proposing FAQ booklets ...
- ◆ Working in multidisciplinary teams, praising the patient and his/her efforts, explaining the pathology and its implications on PA, underlining the improvements, collecting positive testimonies, emphasising the success
- ◆ Preparing a planning with the patient, proposing group PA to increase mutual assistance, organizing a follow up to evaluate the improvements, preparing a list of exercises, rating the patient's motivation, pedometer use
- ◆ Integrating courses on PA during PTs' education, preparing a booklet and sending it to the PTs, organizing professional meetings with multidisciplinary exchanges, inviting PTs to specific activities, selected papers
- ◆ Gathering booklets with available resources, providing video in the waiting room, developing a list of the interesting websites with information about opportunities, updating the mailing list of the sports clubs, ...
- ◆ Involving the patient's family in order to make them aware about their role, suggesting to the family to participate to the activities, implementing a follow up with questionnaires, guiding to other professionals, ...
- ◆ Providing concrete examples of exercises to do at home, explaining how to cumulate 10 minutes periods of PA, updating the facilities' directory, meeting the local stakeholders, ...
- ◆ Scheduling meetings with physicians, physical educators, other PTs, organizing in-service sessions, attending regularly to local events in order to meet other health professionals, creating forum on Internet, ...

Discussion

- ◆ One of the key elements would be to create multidisciplinary teams. By using what exists, the PT should be able to integrate his/her role as PA promoter and guide the patients to specialized educators.
- ◆ 100% of positive opinions about the seminar and its usefulness.

